Atty Docket#:J103UB02US00

Ser. No. 10/612,283 Amdt. dated July 2, 2007 Reply to Office action mailed January 31, 2007

Amendments to the Claims/Listing of the Claims

1. (currently amended) A method operable on a computer for automatically selecting and packaging items for mailing, comprising the steps of: storing item characteristics for a plurality of items; storing postal costs for packages based on package characteristics; receiving a customer order specifying a plurality of items for-shipping

a shipment, the shipment comprising at least one package; by mail retrieving a selected characteristic for each of the plurality of items; storing a list comprising identifiers corresponding to specified items; automatically determining a number of packages comprising the shipment and determining which items of the customer order will be contained in each package ;determining,

the determining step carried out based on the selected the identifiers, the stored item characteristics corresponding to the identifiers and the postal costs for packages.

characteristic, if a single-package-containing the plurality of items-will exceed a desired postal rate; if the single-package will not exceed the desired postal rate, packaging-the plurality of-items-in-a-single package; if the single package will exceed the desired postal rate, dividing, based on the selected characteristic, the customer order into multiple-suborders, each sub-order including a subset of the plurality of items selected so that the sub-order will be at the desired postal rate, printing a mailer including a control indicia on the mailer, automatically selecting, based on the control indicia, items for inclusion in each sub-order, and packaging each of the sub-orders individually so that the customer order comprises multiple-packages;

2. (original) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the customer order is received by mail on a pre-printed form.

and mailing the single or multiple packages to the customer.

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- 3. A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the selected said stored item characteristics characteristic is include at least one of chosen from the group comprising: item weight, item thickness and item size.
- 4. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 1 wherein the further including a step of packaging each of the sub-orders comprises the steps of:

printing a respective mailers, each mailer mailer for each
corresponding to a package for the shipment, each mailer defining
customer selected items to comprise the corresponding package; sub-order;

placing each mailer on an assembly line; and
placing each <u>customer selected item comprising</u> item in each suberder <u>package</u> on the <u>associated</u> <u>corresponding</u> mailer as the mailer
traverses the assembly line.

- 5. (original) A method in accordance with claim 4 wherein: each mailer comprises a printed paper mailer; each paper mailer includes, on a first side, a bar code indicative of the items to be packaged with the mailer and on a second side a customer address.
- 6. (original) A method in accordance with claim 5 wherein the assembly line comprises: a scanner for reading the bar code on each mailer; a plurality of hoppers, each hopper containing a plurality of like items; and a mechanism responsive to computer control for moving an item from a hopper onto a mailer.
- 7. (original) A method in accordance with claim 6 and further including a customer message on the front of a mailer readable by a customer and indicating that a customer order has been fulfilled in multiple packages.
- 8. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 7 <u>further</u> comprising a wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders includes

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shrink-wrapping each of the sub-orders in packages in a plastic wrap so that the customer address and customer message are readable through the plastic wrap.

- 9. (currently amended) A method in accordance with claim 4 <u>4</u> wherein the step of receiving a customer order is performed at a location geographically remote from the step of packaging each of the sub-orders <u>placing each</u> mailer on an assembly line.
- 10. (currently amended) A system for selecting and packaging items for mailing, comprising:
 - a processor;
- a memory connected to the processor, the memory storing data and instructions for controlling the operation of the processor; the processor operative to perform the steps of

storing item characteristics for a plurality of items;
storing postal costs for packages based on package characteristics;
receiving a customer order specifying a plurality of items for-shipping
a shipment, the shipment comprising at least one package; by mail
retrieving a selected characteristic for each of the plurality of items;
storing a list comprising identifiers corresponding to items to

comprise the shipment;
automatically determining a number of packages comprising the

shipment and determining which items of the customer order will be contained in each package idetermining.

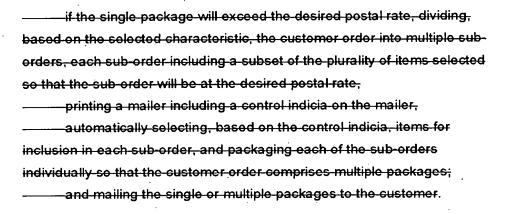
the determining step carried out based on the selected the identifiers, the stored item characteristics corresponding to the identifiers and the postal costs for packages.

characteristic, if a single package containing the plurality of items will exceed a desired postal rate;

if the single package will not exceed the desired postal rate, packaging the plurality of items in a single package;

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- 11. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the customer order is received by mail on a pre-printed form.
- 12. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the selected characteristic is chosen from the group comprising: item weight, item thickness and item size.
- 13. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 further including an assembly line and wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders comprises the steps of: printing a mailer for each sub-order; placing each mailer on the assembly line; and placing each item in each sub-order on the associated mailer as the mailer traverses the assembly line.
- 14. (original) A system in accordance with claim 13 wherein: each mailer comprises a printed paper mailer; each paper mailer includes, on a first side, a bar code indicative of the items to be packaged with the mailer and on a second side a customer address.
- 15. (original) A system in accordance with claim 14 wherein the assembly line comprises: a scanner for reading the bar code on each mailer; a plurality of hoppers, each hopper containing a plurality of like items; and a mechanism responsive to computer control for moving an item from a

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hopper onto a mailer.

- 16. (original) A system in accordance with claim 15 and further including a customer message on the front of a mailer readable by a customer and indicating that a customer order has been fulfilled in multiple packages.
- 17. (original) A system in accordance with claim 16 wherein the step of packaging each of the sub-orders includes shrink-wrapping each of the sub-orders in a plastic wrap so that the customer address and customer message are readable through the plastic wrap.
- 18. (original) A system in accordance with claim 10 wherein the step of receiving a customer order is performed at a location geographically remote from the step of packaging each of the sub-orders.

19-22 (canceled)